

7/2/03

As our State leaders and Federal Congressional Delegation work on transportation solutions to end gridlock, these proposed rule changes only increase gridlock!!! The regional transportation plan is for a multimodal port to be built in Mukilteo...Washington State Ferries would dock, passengers would board buses, trains and carpools to commute to Seattle...These proposed rule changes challenge the concept of ending gridlock...they would be prohibitive for commuters trying to make connections...as they would impede our travel...They are also another unfunded mandate that shifts a huge financial burden on Washington State Ferries....We just had a 5% fare increase to keep the system afloat, and a 5-cent gas tax increase to help Washington State Ferries.... These proposed rules would cause the following:

- 1.) Residents of Whidbey Island would be treated like criminals by singling only them out as potential "terrorists"....as we are the majority of ferry riders....
- 2.) The economy of Whidbey Island would suffer tremendously as goods and services would cease coming to the island via Washington State Ferries...
- 3.) The current ferry schedule for Washington State Ferries would go out the window as ferry runs would be cancelled, stranding commuters on the mainland...especially during peak summer sailing season...

These proposed rule changes should have taken into consideration the fact that Washington State Ferries is a "State Highway" and people depend on the ferries for their livlyhoods...Rush-hour commuters have to make bus connections....